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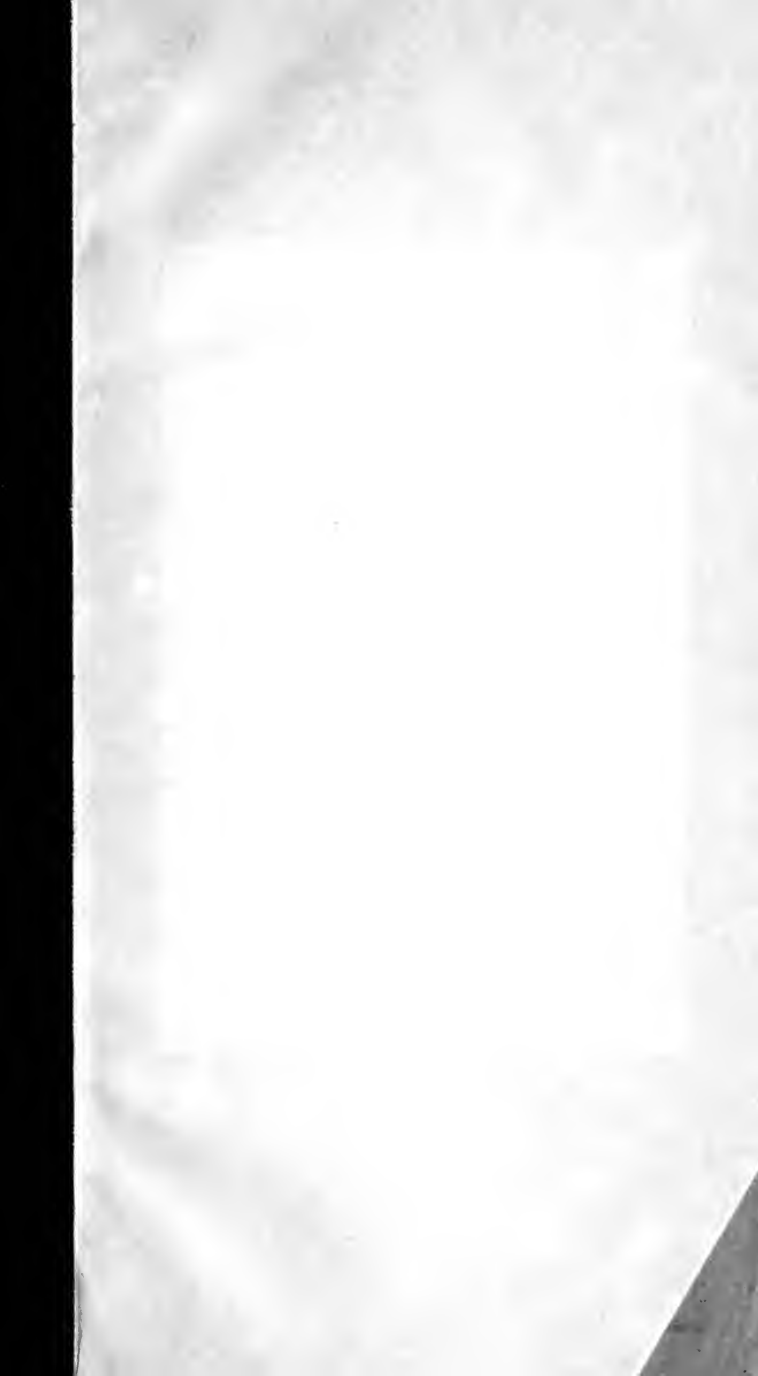
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No. CLXXX.

FRENCH'S MINOR DRAMA.

The Acting Edition:

THE

BACHELOR'S BEDROOM

OR,

TWO IN THE MORNING,

A COMIC SCENE,

BY CHARLES MATTHEWS, Esq.

WITH CAST OF CHARACTERS, STAGE BUSINESS, COSTUMES,
RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC., ETC.

AS PERFORMED AT THE PRINCIPAL THEATRES.

NEW YORK:

SAMUEL FRENCH, PUBLISHER,

122 NASSAU STREET. (UP STAIRS)

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LYCEUM—LONDON.

NEWPENNY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Keeley.
STRANGER,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. C. Mathews.
GENTLEMAN, (to appear at window,)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Kerridge.
FEMALE, (to speak without,)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Miss Lana

MUSEUM—BOSTON, 1850.

NEWPENNY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. W. Warren.
STRANGER,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. L. J. Mestayer.

MUSEUM—BOSTON, 1856.

NEWPENNY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. W. Warren.
STRANGER,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. H. Farren.

CHAMBER STREET, N. Y., 1856

NEWPENNY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. L. Goldsmidt.
STRANGER,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. L. J. Mestayer.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION, FORTY MINUTES.

BACHELOR'S BEDROOM:

SCENE 1ST. — A BACHELOR'S BEDROOM,

The pink of neatness. In the centre of flat, a very wide window, sufficiently large every way to show plainly, when open, another window of similar dimensions, supposed to be on the other side of the street. The window has a white blind drawn down—curtains drawn over it. On R. H. a bed, the curtains drawn closely around it. At the side of the bed, a chair with a morning gown laid neatly on it—at the foot, a rushlight burning. On R. H. 1 E., near the bed, a wash-hand-stand as if recently used. Set cup-board door R. H. 2 E. On the wall L. H. hangs a Greek cap and a latch key. L. H. 2 E. a very neat fire-place—fender, tongs, rug, fireguards, &c.—fire nearly out—coal scuttle with three lumps of coal in it on L. H.—a pair of bellows hangs from a nail near the chimney—a boot-jack on the rug. On mantelpiece, looking-glass, two vases—in the centre a watch-case with a watch in it—two unlighted candles, one with extinguisher—on the rug a foot-pan—a dish with soap, sponge, etc., and a horse for towels, as if recently used—an arm-chair near it with a jacket hanging over the back of it. Near the chimney L. H. a small writing table, with its appropriate furniture, particularly a bundle of new pens, a pen-knife, sealing wax and a paper-knife. L. H. 3 E. a door leading to the stair case—an umbrella and hat on pegs—carpet down. On L. H. 1 E. a settle with things laid very neatly, as if recently taken off—a pair of boots standing side by side in front of it. Stage dark, excepting the rushlight, and the red light thrown from a fire on the objects near it.

[MR. NEWPENNY is in bed but not visible to the audience.]

The wind is heard and a gentle rain at intervals—silence for a minute or two, then irregular knocking behind flat, moderate at first, and gradually increasing—supposed to be in the street.

Newpenny. [In bed—the curtains drawn close—a knock,] Come in! [A knock—he pops his head through the curtains—a knock—he pulls open the curtains.] What can be the matter? [A knock.] Oh! it's in the street; some one locked out of his lodgings. [A knock.] It never

can be the same person that was knocking half an hour ago, and kept up halloing out——

Voice. Richards! [*Knocking.*]

New. Richards! it's the very same, I declare! They 're in no hurry to open the door, however.

Voice. Richards! [*Knocking.*]

New. Confound Richards! I only wish he was as bad a sleeper as I am; he wouldn't want so much [*Knock*] knocking and——

Voi. Richards!

New. Calling for. [*Knocking and calling.*] That's right! Knock away—don't be afraid! He's getting impatient, and I don't wonder at it. [*Knocking.*] Where the deuce can it be at? It sounds like number [*Two knocks.*] two! It must be [*Knock.*] number two! [*Dropping off to sleep again.*] at number [*2 knocks*] two—number [*Knocking.*] two! [*As he drops asleep on his pillow—pause; then a tremendous knocking which wakes him up.*] Oh! upon my soul there's no standing this! He'll knock there all night, and I've got to be at my office at eight o'clock. I shan't get a wink. [*Continued knocking and calls of "Richards," till he opens the window, c.*] I'll put a stop to it at once. [*He takes his dressing gown from the chair at the side of the bed, puts it on, and then draws the curtains. Single knocks, while he gets out of bed and puts on his slippers. The dressing gown must reach to his heels. He then hastily shuffles to the window, draws up the blind and throws open the window—knocking ceases.*] It is at number two—that infernal lodging house opposite! Confound number two! [*Knock single.*] Sir! sir! the noise you are making is abominable. Sir! [*Knocking ceases.*] Do you hear me, sir?

Voi. Sir?

New. At last! Here I am sir—up here, in the two pair opposite—that's it.

Voi. What's the matter, sir?

New. Will you allow me to ask you if you contemplate knocking at that door much longer?

Voi. What do you say, Sir?

New. What do I say! Sir, I say it would be much more agreeable to me, and I presume to my neighbors, if you would go quietly into your house without alarming the whole parish, as you are doing—that's what I say, sir.

Voi. Pray, sir, do you mean to insult me by telling me to go quietly into my house, when I've almost beaten the door down, and can't get in? Surely you must have heard how I've been knocking.

New. I have indeed, rather——

Voi. And it must be evident to you that I can't make my man hear.

New. I have no hesitation in declaring that your man must be deaf! However, sir, now that I have explained to you how very unpleasant your noise has become, I am sure you will have too much consideration for your neighbors, to disturb them any longer. Give your man time to get up and dress himself, and I've no doubt he'll come to the door—he *must* have heard you—I am sure he must,

only be patient! Sir, I have the honor of wishing you a very good night! [*Shuts the window — shivers and coughs as he returns to bed.*] How very pleasant! a nice cold I've got—I feel it already. [*Sneezes.*] I wonder what o'clock it is? [*Takes his watch out of the stand on the chimney piece, L. H. 2 E. and brings it to rushlight on R. H.*] Two in the morning! very pleasant—as I said before, I must be at my office at eight: I haven't been one minute after, for ten years—so a great deal of sleep I'm likely to get! [*Arranges his bed.*] Come, come, my gentleman has had the manners to yield respectfully to my remonstrances, and, as luckily I am dying with sleep, I may still get a little sweet and refreshing—[*Knocking repeated, till Newpenny calls out, Hoy, hoy! there he is again. Knocking — he throws up the window. c.*] Sir! [*Knocking ceases.*—Sir!

Voi. Oh, don't bother! can't you go to sleep and let me alone?

New. Go to sleep indeed! I defy a top to sleep! I can tell you this—as true as you are born, if you don't leave off knocking I'll call the police.

Voi. You may call the devil, if you please; but I've a right to knock as long as I like at my own door.

New. You've no right.

Voi. I have.

New. You haven't.

Voi. I have! and if I have n't I shall.

New. You shan't!

Voi. No?

New. No!

Voi. Oh! we'll soon see that. [*Knocks.*] Richards!

New. Sir! sir! stop—I've something to say. [*Knocking stops.*]

Voi. Well, well! what now? Can't you be quiet?

New. Can't *you* be quiet, you mean. That's just what I've been asking you this last half hour! I tell you I do n't like being kept up here in the cold!

Voi. Then how do you think I like being kept down here in the wet?

New. Wet? bless me, so it is; pouring cats and dogs. I shall catch my death of cold.

Voi. What do you say?

New. I say I shall catch my death.

Voi. So shall I. Richards! Richards! [*Knocking incessantly.*]

New. Oh, by Jove, I can't stand this. [*Knocking ceases.*] Why don't you get a bed at an inn?

Voi. I've my own peculiar reasons for not losing sight of this door. [*Knocks.*]

New. There is only one thing to be done. Sir! Sir! [*Knocking ceases.*] I wish you would do me the favor to step up here.

Voi. How do you mean?

New. From the little I have seen of you, and the great deal I have heard of you, I should say you were as likely a man as any I know, to knock there till—

Voi. Till they let me in! you're right; I am.

New. Then, if agreeable to you, I'd much rather see you quietly asleep, in my room, than hear you awake, anywhere else within a mile of it.

Voi. Upon my soul, sir, if you're in earnest, I don't think your offer is to be sneezed at.

New. No more do I. [*Sneezes.*]

Voi. What do you say?

New. I say, [*Sneezes.*] I say I don't think it is a thing to be [*Sneezes.*] I say I wish you'd make haste and decide.

Voi. Well then, under the circumstances, I accept your offer.

New. Thank heaven!

Voi. I'll just make one more trial. [*Begins to knock and call.*] Richards!

New. No, no! if you knock any more I'll leave you where you are. Here! look out, here's my latch-key. [*Takes key off the nail L. H. F., and throws it out of the window.*] Mind! the door opposite No. 35, second story. Stay! I'll light a candle for you. [*Pauses a little — shuts the window.*] Yes, that's my only chance. [*A door heard to bang L. H. 3 E. and a window to break.*] There! he has banged the door so that he has broken the fan-light! The man's a positive earthquake. [*Lights a candle at the rushlight.*] Now if he is but a snorer, that will be complete! [*Opens door L. H. 3 E.*] This way, sir.

[*A fall heard upon the stairs, L. H. 3 E.*]

Voi. Damn the coal-scuttle! I've broken my shins!

New. Hush! for goodness' sake—you'll wake all the house. How he swears, too—I hope no one will hear him—I shall lose my character.

Voi. Why the devil do n't you show a light there?

New. Hush! don't bawl so; and hold on by the banisters—that's it.

A stranger enters door 3 E. L. H. hastily, passing before Newpenny who is near the door L. H. He appears wet and muddy—a cigar in his mouth and a dripping umbrella in his hand—he comes down R. H.

Str. Thank you. Here's your latch-key.

New. Key! I lent you a key, and you return me a corkscrew.

Str. I can't compliment you on your staircase; it's steep as a ladder and as dark as pitch.

New. Why, you see, not expecting visitors at this hour, the lamp was out. [*Seeing that the door is left open.*] Have you any one else with you? [*The stranger shakes the rain off his hat, and puts it down with his umbrella, on a chair — Newpenny instantly removes them.*] You've left the door open; I'm sure you're not aware of it, but—deuce take him. [*Seeing that the other does not attend, puts the candle on the table, and shuts the door, during which time the stranger goes to the window centre and throws it open.*]

Str. Exactly opposite!—my own window, I declare — there it is, sure enough. [*Walks away from it and paces the stage.*]

New. [*Shutting the window after him, down R.*] Ah! you live on the second floor opposite, do you? Hollo! why you're smoking, and I've a particular objection——

Str. Am I?—I didn't know it. [*Puts his cigar on the mantelpiece L. H. 2 E.*]

New. They didn't expect you home to night, it seems?

Str. [*To himself*] It's very extraordinary.

New. What is it?

Str. What has just occurred.

New. Oh! my asking you up! Why, as you say, it was an odd thing to do—but——

Str. [*Without hearing him.*] Not to open the door—my own door! Do you think, sir, they heard me knock?

New. Do I think! Oh, my gracious! You don't really ask me such a question seriously?

Str. Then it must have been done on purpose. They must have bribed Richards to leave me out in the street, and on such a night, too—a devil of a night—a plot; don't you think it so yourself, sir?

New. Why, if you ask me my opinion——

Str. In a pouring rain—I'm drenched to the skin.

New. [*Perceiving that the stranger is wet through and is inundating the carpet.*] Oh, my goodness! Why, my dear sir, you must be soaked through and through! [*Goes and fetches a towel.*]

Str. [*To himself.*] Shut me out of my own house at two in the morning! [*Newpenny follows him about, sopping the wet after him.*] They guessed it was me. They must have known my voice. [*Sees N.*] Hallo! what on earth are you about? [*X. R. H.*]

New. [*Follows his trace with the towel.*] Nothing—nothing—only I'm rather particular about my floor, and you're dripping like a water spout.

Str. So would you if you'd been an hour under one. [*X. L. H. and squeezes the water out of his coat tails.*]

New. [*Sopping it up.*] Oh, my gracious! he was an earthquake just now—now he's a deluge.

Str. What a fidgety little fellow this is. [*Going up.*]

New. Oh! it's no use. I give it up—there! [*Throws the away the towel—goes to the fireplace L. H. 2 E. and takes up the bellows, during which time the stranger seems to reflect.*]

Str. Dark as pitch; no one stirring—that's quite clear.

New. You see, sir, I'm getting a bit of fire in again, for you.

Str. You're quite right. And yet, generally, a feather would wake her—what can it mean?—[*Walks to and fro.*]

New. If he's going to stamp up and down all night, in this way, he'll be an agreeable companion. Sir! Sir!

Str. What's the matter?

New. Wouldn't you like to rest yourself a little? You see here's a capital fire now; and as it is just half-past two, by my watch——[*Yawns.*]

Str. Don't yawn!

New. I won't—but it strikes me we might begin to think about going to sleep. Eh! what do you think? [*Blows the fire.*]

Str. [*Talks to himself, and takes off his coat.*] Sleep, indeed? ah! [*throwing the coat on the bed.*] I wish I could sleep. [*Tries to pull off his boots by help of a chair.*] It's easy enough to talk of sleep—they stick like wax!—*Throws down the bed-clothes as if going to bed.*] You don't happen to have such a thing as a boot-jack, sir, do you?

New. Eh! hallo! what's he about? [*Runs to him.*] You'll excuse me, sir, but there's one thing I'm rather particular about, and that is, sleeping alone—I always sleep alone.

Str. Oh! What, you've only one bed, then?

New. Only one! I dare say you think I am very meanly furnished; but you know you are not compelled to stay here if you don't like it. I wish now I could get rid of him.

Str. [*On side of bed.*] To shut the door against me in a pouring rain.

New. Come, sir, there's an arm-chair at your service, close to the fire, and you can sleep there very comfortably—or not, just as you please.

Str. [*Trying the arm-chair.*] Ay, ay; anything will do for me.

New. [*Arranging his pillow.*] Good night then—or rather good morning—for it's almost——[*Yawns.*]

Str. Oh! for heaven's sake, don't yawn. If there's anything I hate, in the world——

New. Well, upon my soul, that's a good one. I must n't yawn in my own bed room now! [*Sits on the side of the bed—jumps up again.*] Hallo! [*perceiving coat.*] Oh, my gracious! if he has n't put his nasty wet coat on the bed. [*Throws it on a chair.*]

Str. Ugh! how wretchedly cold I am, to be sure! I say, sir, have you anything I could throw over my shoulders?

New. [*Behind the curtain—effects not to hear.*] Good night, sir, good night.

Str. Oh! here's a jacket!

New. Stop, stop! I beg your pardon—it's impossible—you can't get it on—it's a new jacket for my little nephew—to-morrow is his birth-day—and you'll burst the seams!

Str. O no! I'm very thin.

New. Why not put on your own coat?

Str. It's soaked through—you've no idea how wet it is.

New. O yes I have—but you can't get the boy's jacket on, I tell you.

Str. No? [*puts it on.*] What do you say to that?

New. Oh, my gracious! [*Str. sits down.*] Oh, what a man!—well don't cross your arms, then, or you'll certainly split it—you must be very careful, or——

Str. That infernal Richards, too—he must have heard me knock.

New. I give it up. [*Going back to bed.*] Oh, dear! oh, dear, what a fool I have been. Never mind! catch me asking any one up again—that's all. Oh! I'm chilled to the bone; I'll pop into bed, dressing-gown and all, and see if I can't get a little warmth into me. [*Gets*

into bed.] Have the kindness to put out the candle, sir, if you please; I can't sleep in a blaze of light. [*a moment's silence — Stranger knocks about the fire irons.*]

Str. You're a bachelor, I suppose.

New. Yes, yes — good night.

Str. A bachelor! What a charm there is in that single word. Bachelor? freedom — independence — tranquility — no troubles — no cares — no anxieties. Bachelor! humph! his sleep is sweet and undisturbed —

New. Is it?

Str. Bachelor! (*Rises.*) bachelor! (*Tramps up and down.*)

New. (*Sitting up.*) My dear sir! if you could make it convenient to leave off tramping up and down the room in that manner, I should esteem it a favor — these small houses are so slight that every step shakes me in my bed — besides, you'll wake the lady underneath — she only came to lodge here yesterday — and she'll think there's a wild beast over her.

Str. You're right — you're right. I didn't know I was doing so. What a fidgetty little frump it is — there! [*Bangs the chair down on the floor.*] There, I'll sit quietly down and then I suppose I'll offend nobody. [*Sits and rocks the chair.*]

New. Now he's knocking the furniture about. Oh, what a man! Do pray be quiet, sir. Deuce take it — I wish now I had left you where you were. I asked you up to stop your noise, and much, I see, I've gained by it. [*Knocking heard against the floor from underneath.*] There, I thought so — there's the lady on the first floor, knocking for us to be quiet. Come, do let us go to sleep; it really is high time.

Str. [*Lights cigar — goes to window c. and throws it up.*] Aye, aye. There it is — my very own window — there's no disguising that fact.

New. [*Sneezing.*] I cannot get warm again, do what I will. My bed's like ice.

Str. [*At window.*] Here will I take up my station for the night — they cannot escape me so.

New. [*Not seeing him.*] Sir, will you be kind enough to throw something over me? [*Stranger puts his wet coat over him.*] *Newpenny* shouts "No, no!" and throws it off. I'm very much afraid I've caught cold, for I'm shivering in a way that — sir! Hallo! Where is he? [*Leans out of the bed and sees him at the window.*] Why, you've got the window open!

Str. What do you say? [*Quietly.*]

New. I say, shut that window, sir.

Str. It's for the smoke.

New. You're giving me cold.

Str. Your chimney smokes, I tell you.

New. No such thing [*Coughs.*] and yet — why it's yourself — you've lighted your cigar again.

Str. There — I've thrown it out of the window. [*Throws out the cigar.*]

New. (*Kneeling in bed.*) Will you shut that window or will you not?

Str. (*Shuts it.*) There, there — don't put yourself in a passion —

from the moment you say it's unpleasant — that's enough for — anything for a quiet life.

New. A quiet life, indeed!

Str. You've surely a right to do as you like in your own room, and make yourself comfortable.

New. Very comfortable.

Str. Particularly after the hospitality you've shown me —

New. Yes, it was a happy hit I made.

Str. There's nothing in the world I would n't do to please you, and show you that your civility has not been extended to —

New. Yes — very well — I'm satisfied. There, I'm going to sleep. He'll chatter for a week.

Str. (*Seating himself in the arm chair on L. H. and whistles.*) Have you been long in this neighborhood, sir? (*Newpenny turns in bed to avoid answering. (Louder.)*) I was enquiring, sir, whether you had lived long in this neighborhood.

New. Yes, yes, I have.

Str. You have? (*Jumps up.*) He has! then he must know all the people in it. What if I — yes I will! (*Goes to the head of the bed and pulls open the curtains.*) Then you must know all the people in it — only imagine, then — (*strikes the bed-post violently with his hand.*) — for I'll tell you all, sir; it will ease my bursting heart, and you'll be able to advise me — only imagine, then, I say — (*strikes bed-post again.*)

New. Stop!

Str. What's the matter?

New. Stop — I won't keep you a moment — I'll get up and listen — I prefer it.

Str. Oh, no, do n't disturb yourself.

New. No, I won't, but I prefer getting up.

Str. Oh! if you prefer it, that's another thing. (*Walks to the fire.*)

New. Yes, it's much better. Oh, my gracious, what a man! (*Putting on his slippers.*)

Str. Don't hurry — do n't hurry on my account — I'm getting a little warm now. (*Stands with his back to the fire.*)

New. (*Behind curtain — sneezes.*) What a man! There, (*comes out.*) if I must hear a story, I may as well hear it by the fireside comfortably, and as there seems no chance of my getting a wink of sleep to-night, (*looking for his cup, etc.*) I shall be better so — much better so — Where's my cap? (*Taking it from Stranger's head.*) There, now, then, for your story — let's see — Where were you? (*Yawns, and sits at table the Stranger seated by the fire L. H. 2 E.*)

Str. Don't yawn! I'm afraid you're too sleepy to follow me.

New. Not a bit! I'm wide awake! very odd if I wasn't! I'm as lively as a grig — so, as you were saying —

Str. Well, then, as I was saying — (*Takes the other candle mechanically from the table, lights it at the other on the table, and places them together as he speaks.*) I'd give a hundred pounds if it was but daylight.

New. Don't mention it; so would I. (*Takes the snuffers and puts the candle out again — the Stranger takes a lump of coal up with the tongs and puts it on the fire.*)

New. Are you putting coals on?

Str. Yes, sir: as I began by telling you, I'm a married man.

New. You never told me any such thing—but no matter.

Str. Mine was a love-match, sir, and the circumstances attending it were as singular as they were unexpected.

New. When you have finished your story, there'll be nothing to prevent my going quietly to sleep, eh?

Str. Well, three months afterwards—

New. Oh! we've got to three months afterwards, have we? Well—three months afterwards—

Str. Well, sir. (*Crossing his arms.*)

New. Do n't cross your arms.

Str. I won't—you know Brentford?

New. Intimately.

Str. Oh, the romantic associations that word conjures up. [*Lights candle again.*]

New. Yes, it's a romantic case—[*puts the candle out*—*Stranger puts on a coal.*] Ah! you're putting coals on again! [*Removes the coal scuttle.*]

Str. Well—two months before my marriage—

New. Stop, stop—I beg your pardon. We've got to *three months* afterwards—don't, let's go back again.

Str. You'll scarcely believe it.

New. What?

Str. I was born at Twickenham.

New. You don't mean it!

Str. But first of all I ought to inform you that my wife—by the by, I don't know whether I told you I was married—

New. Yes, yes, you did, you did. Oh, my gracious!

Str. Well, sir. [*Crosses his arms.*]

New. Don't cross your arms.

Str. No, I won't. My father-in-law always declared that when my wife was a baby—

New. Now she's a baby again. There's not the slightest connection in his ideas—[*yawns.*]

Str. Don't yawn—you put me out. Where was I?

New. U-p-o-n m-y l-i-f-e, I d-o-n't k-n-o-w.

Str. Oh! my father-in-law's first wife—that was it.

New. No, no, no—three months after your marriage—you had got as far as that.

Str. Had I? I told you, then, of my finding out that a young man was in love with my wife?

New. The deuce there was! What, three months after your marriage? Oh, ho! I see it all—you were regularly booked.

Str. What do you mean by that, sir?

New. Nothing, only—

Str. I repeat it, sir—when I first saw her she was engaged to be married to another—but my rival happening to absent himself for three days—

New. There he was wrong—I know that by experience—I, like a fool, left my sweetheart for three days only, and—but go on —

Str. [*Looking for the coals, with the tongs in his hands.*] I seized the moment, ran away with the girl, and when the booby came back I had made her my wife. [*Laughs.*]

New. [*Laughs.*] Ha! ha! well done! [*Sees Stranger putting something on the fire.*] Stop! stop! what's that? You'll excuse me, but you've got my bellows. [*Takes them and hangs them on the nail by the fire.*]

Str. The worst part was — [*takes up a bundle of quills.*] You have your quills ready nibbed, I see.

New. Yes, I'm very particular about my nibs.

Str. The worst part was, I never could get hold of the goose; he kept out of the way on purpose. Could I but once have laid my hand upon him—once have got the booby within my grasp, I should have smashed him as I do this. [*Smashes the pens on the table.*]

New. Oh, my gracious! you've ruined my nibs! [*Takes the bundle from him, and puts them further off—whilst he does so, the Stranger takes up bootjack with the tongs to put on the fire.*] Hallo! now you've got my boot-jack. [*Takes it and puts it under the wash-stand.*] He'll certainly be the death of me.

Str. Not that I had any reason to fear him at all, but [*takes up a stick of sealing wax*—you know females are of that soft, yielding nature, that I was naturally anxious —

New. [*Tries to get hold of the sealing wax.*] Yes, yes, of course! You've got the sealing wax.

Str. How red you are in the face!

New. I don't know how it is—whether the interest I take in your story, or whether —

Str. But you do n't blame me—judge for yourself! For my own part I never yield in anything—never. [*Newpenny pulls the wax out of his hand, which breaks*—I had occasion to go to Brentford; my business over, I wrote to my wife, naming a day for my return. A friend who was going to London, undertook to deliver my letter,—[*takes up pen-knife*—when, only conceive his conduct, with my letter in his pocket, he absolutely changed his mind, and started for Bristol—Infamous! [*Sticks the knife into the table—Newpenny tries to pull out the pen-knife, as the Stranger takes the watch out of the stand—a short time after I found the matter out—[opens the case and turns the hands]*—and to prevent any more time being lost, I determined to take the case into my own hands —

New. I beg your pardon, that's my watch!—[*Takes it and places it in its wooden stand on the chimney piece.*]

Str. Yes, I resolved to come up to town myself. [*Taking an ivory paper knife.* I threw myself into an omnibus and left Brentford, determined to break the matter off at once. [*Snaps the knife in two.*] At last I arrived in town, nearly an hour ago —

New. Nearly!

Str. More—more—considerably more—no matter; I run to my door—I knock, and —

New. [*Quickly.*] And I know the rest. [*Jumps up.*] There, your story is over. I'm very much pleased—and now I'll go to bed. It's a singular thing I had much such a thing happen to myself.

Str. Indeed.

New. Yes, I'll tell you about it to-morrow. *Going*—[*Stranger holds him.*]

Str. No! now!

New. No, no. I must be at my office at eight, and really——

Str. [*Holding him.*] Never mind for once—it won't take you a moment.

New. It's nothing, I tell you.

Str. There! let me hear it—I may get a hint from it.

New. Well! I once had a sweet-heart—that's all.

Str. All! all! do you say? Then there's more—go on!

New. I was going to be married; but, unluckily, business called me from home for three days—just like your rival ——

Str. Yes, the fool—go on!

New. When I came back, a thief had stolen my treasure ——

Str. What! your money?

New. No-o—my sweetheart. A scoundrel—just as you did—the blackguard—I got back at night—knocked at the door and there they left me—kicking my heels.

Str. You too! and in the rain?

New. No, it was snowing.

Str. Ah! that makes a difference.

New. Yes, one can't stand it so long—so I soon gave it up; but, as I went away, I cast one look up at the window ——

Str. Ay! a lingering look—I know it—well.

New. And what do you think I saw?

Str. All dark?

New. No—a light in the window.

Str. In her room?

New. In her room—and by that light I saw ——

Str. What?

New. Oh, my gracious! [*Two shadows are seen on the window curtain opposite—a man and a woman, talking familiarly.*]

Str. What's the matter? what did you see?

New. Just what you see there. [*Points to window.*]

Str. Fire and fury—my wife and—who can it be?

New. There—just as mine did—ha! ha! ha! ha!

Str. Confusion! do you laugh at me? [*Seizes and shakes him.*]

New. No, no, it was a slight convulsion—nothing more.

Str. [*Furiously.*] Oh! for something to annihilate—a gun—a cannon—a knife—a stone! (*Rushes about—takes watch from the chimney piece and throws it through the opposite window—sounds of broken glass heard—the light disappears.*)

New. What have you thrown?

Str. They have disappeared—the wretches!

New. What was it you threw?

Str. Oh! don't bother!

New. But you've thrown something of mine out of the window—what was it?

Str. What can it matter?

New. It matters very much?

Str. I don't know—I tell you something that was on the chimney-piece.

New. (*Rushes to the chimney.*) Mercy on me! Why it is my watch! (*Seizes Stranger.*) Do you know I shall do you a very serious injury? (*Daylight begins to break.*) You've broken my rest—you've broken my furniture—you've broken my watch. You are my plague—my torment—my detestation—and now leave my house!

Str. Where's the key?

New. You broke it you know. Leave the house!

Str. Another key.

New. Leave the house!

Str. How? Which way? Where? Is't the door locked? you know it is.

New. I don't care.

Str. You don't, sir! [*Treads on his toe.*] Is it your intention to detain me here against my will?

New. What! detain you! I detain you! Oh! yes, I think so—my good friend, if that window had n't been two stories high, you'd have been out of this an hour ago, I can tell you.

Str. Then give me a key!

New. I will—don't be alarmed—I luckily have got another—detain you! detain him!! [*Goes to door, R. H. 2 E.*]

Str. (*Aside.*) Broad daylight! They must open the door now. Make haste with the key! Ah! Mary, Mary, is this the way you repay my affection? [*Listening.*] Eh! I heard a door shut! [*Runs to the window, c. flat.*] It was mine—I thought as much—an individual has gone out—it must be the man! The key! where is that horrid, execrable key? I shall lose him.

New. I can't think where the deuce I can have put it.

Str. Confusion! he'll escape and I can't even see his face—a rope! a ladder! any thing! [*Drags the counterpane off the bed.*] I won't lose him—I'm determined!

New. Here it is at last! Hollo! thieves! thieves! I've got you, the — [*Seizes him by the collar.*]

Str. Pooh! nonsense! you little fool—let me go. [*Throws him on the bed and puts one end of the counterpane out of the window—Newpenny gets up and seizes the other end.*]

New. Give me my counterpane!

Str. Let me get down!

New. My counterpane!

Str. I only want to get down by it!

New. I don't care—I won't have it.—[*The stranger lets go his end of the counterpane—Newpenny tumbles against the wash-hand-stand and upsets it with a crash.*]

Voice. [*Without.*] Good gracious! What is that noise above stairs? What a disturbance there has been all night.

Str. Surely that's my wife's voice. Mary, how came you in this house?

Female. Moved in yesterday, from over the way.

Str. Then she's innocent! It's my wife, Mrs. Higginbottom!

New. Higginbottom! my sweetheart! this, then, is the fellow who stole her from me.

Str. Good bye—I must run. [*Seizes Newpenny's hat and stick—going—Newpenny stops him.*]

New. Hollo! is that the way you leave the house, after all the trouble you've given me—and not a word of apology.

Str. I beg your pardon—you're right, but I'm in such a state of agitation,—[*Comes forward*—Ladies and gentlemen, if there's one thing I detest more than another—[*gesticulating with the stick—Newpenny takes it from him and brings forward his wet umbrella.*]

New. I beg your pardon.

Str. You put me out,—I say the fear of taking to myself that which properly belongs to another—[*Takes off his hat—Newpenny seizes and brings forward the wet one—throws his own by mistake out of the window.*] What a fidget you are! How can I speak if you keep interrupting me? Ladies and gentlemen—I say again, a burden is placed on my shoulder which does not properly belong to me—

New. Stay,—you're right again, there,—I forgot my nephew's jacket.

Str. Sir, let me tell you these interruptions—[*crosses his arm.*]

New. Don't cross your arms—there you've done it,—I knew you would. [*Turns him around and shows the jacket split up.* Now, come here. [*Takes him by the arm.*] I must bring this to an end, for I can bear it no longer; and I am sure all my friends in the neighborhood here, must have had enough of you. There's your umbrella—and there's your hat. Ladies and gentlemen, he shall bore you no longer—I'll see him safe out myself, this time—but if you have borne his visit with only one half the patience I have, perhaps he may obtain your permission again to make his bow to you. [*To Stranger.*] Bow!—and if so, I give him leave to knock me up as often as you please, at

TWO IN THE MORNING.

SITUATIONS.

NEWPENNY.

STRANGER.

CURTAIN.

R. H.

L. H.

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you. I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you.

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